

August 9th, 2024

Minnesota Dental Association  
1335 Industrial Blvd NE, Minneapolis, MN 55413

**Esteemed Delegates:**

On behalf of the Minnesota Dental Therapy Association (MDTA) and its members, thank you for this opportunity to share a brief summary of our events this past year.

**MDTA Leadership**

President Rhonda Gravitis has previously served our board with 2 two-year terms as Secretary and has spent the last 1.5 years as President. She stepped up to President when Katie Craig needed to step down for family reasons. Rhonda graduated from Metropolitan State University, St. Paul, Minnesota in December of 2017 and practices as an ADT in the Iron Range area of rural Minnesota. Due to Katie Craig's departure, Janelle Jehn has graciously been still acting as Immediate Past President. Janelle works as the dental clinical director at Southside Community Health Service. Darlene Zemke is in her last term as Treasurer, and Irene Karras is also in her last term as Secretary. Darlene and Irene both graduated from Metropolitan State University Class of 2023. Newly elected Eric Colón is our Student Liaison and he graduated from the University of Minnesota in 2022. The newer members on our board have been bringing several new ideas and drive to our leadership team. The future is bright!

**Board members of August 2024:**

Rhonda Gravitis, President  
Finalizing election results, President-Elect  
Janelle Jehn, Immediate Past-President  
Darlene Zemke, Treasurer  
Irene Karras, Secretary  
Eric Colón, Student Liaison

**MDTA Conference**

The MDTA held their second conference on Friday October 13, 2023. Listening and learning from their members, MDTA added a Job/Opportunity Fair to give potential employers direct access to meet Dental Therapists in person and create meaningful relationships. Attendees received several CE credits, updated their professional headshots and were able to socialize with classmates and make new connections with other DT/ADTs.

Please visit the link to view Presenters from the 2023 Conference: <https://www.mmdta.org/general-2-1-1>

Register for our 2024 MDTA Conference on Friday October 15th 2024:

<https://www.mndta.org/2024-conference-1>

Help fund our 2024 conference by becoming a sponsor! Sponsorship levels:

<https://www.mndta.org/sponsorship-levels>

### **Funding/Community Partnerships**

The MDTA has received the last of the funding from PEW, and are actively searching for a new 501c6 grant writer to locate and secure funding for our future. This is an arduous task which our current board have not been faced with before but have been reaching out to our originators for advice. As this task is in the forefront, we are continuing to work in our respective communities spreading the goals and successes of Dental Therapy as well as helping new employers find DTs to fit their offices well.

### **Participation in the Dental Community**

Eric Colón, ADT, with the help of the past Student Liaison chair, Bill Heitzman, has been reaching out to new and different groups expanding our reach. He has been going out to high schools, hygiene schools and, as always, the dental therapy schools, letting the students know that the MDTA is here to support and answer any question they may have. His excitement for our profession has brought Dental Therapy to the forefront of the next generation of potential DT/ADTs!

MDTA was represented at the April 2024 Star of the North Meeting in Saint Paul, and at the National Oral Health Conference in St. Louis, MO, also in April 2024. The MDTA had a booth on the exhibit floor and was open for questions and MDTA swag.

In July, the MDTA elected a new Student Liaison, and will be finalizing a new President-Elect soon. We are thankful for the past members who have served in these roles and continue to be mentors to those newly elected.

In closing, the Minnesota Dental Therapy Association has many tasks ahead, however making a difference and succeeding is not new to us - all in good time. The upcoming conference renews and strengthens our relationships and drives our passions further than ever thought before. The Minnesota Dental Therapy Association stands strong, and thanks each and every one of our supporters. Please reach out with questions and continue to stay up to date with our website and social media pages. We look forward to serving our communities and furthering Minnesotan's oral health.

Best Regards,

***Rhonda Gravitis***

Rhonda Gravitis, DH, ADT

President

Minnesota Dental Therapy Association